Haftarah - Parshat Va Yishlach (Obadiah 1:1-21)
based on the translations of
Robert Alter, Aryeh Kaplan, Stone Edition Tanach, Slokti (Soncino), JPS, Jerusalem Bible, New King James Bible
modeled after the recording in *Navigating the Bible II*:
https://bible.ort.org/books/haftarotd4.asp?action=displaypage&book=1&chapter=1&verse=1&portion=9

1:1 The vision of Obadiah: [This is the word] of the Lord *Elohim* (YHWH) [about Edom]. A report we have heard—

a message [from YHWH] and an envoy [throughout the nations] were sent: "[It's time to rise up]—rise up against her in battle."

2 [You must see] [that small you are]—[thus I have made you]—[among the nations]. Despised you are indeed.

3 The pride of your heart [has beguiled you], you who dwell in the clefts of the rock, [who made the heights] [into your abode],

who say in your heart, "Who can bring me down [to the ground]?"

4 [Should you go as high] as the eagle, if among the stars you made your nest, from there I will bring you down, [so says YHWH].

5 If thieves [should come *to* you], marauders by night—how ruined you are!—[they would steal] [what suffices them].

If vintners came to you, [would they not] leave some gleanings?

6 [See how] [they have pillaged] Esau, [how laid bare] [are his hoards].

7 [To the border] [they have sent you off]—all the men [allied *with* you] ("men of your *brit*"). [They have beguiled you].

They have prevailed against you—the men [in league with you]. [Those eating your bread] have laid a trap [beneath you].

There is no discernment [in him].

8 [And shall I not] on that day—[thus says YHWH]—eradicate [wise men] from Edom, and understanding from the mountain of Esau?

9 Dismayed will be your mighty men, O Teman, [so that there may be] [cut off every man] from the mountain of Esau, by slaughter.

10 [For the oppression] done to your brother Jacob, [you will be covered] with shame, [and you shall vanish] forever.

11 [On the day] [that you stood] aloof, [that being the day] on which captured by strangers was his wealth,

[and foreigners came in]—they entered [into his gates], [and in Jerusalem] [they cast] lots. [You also] were as one of them.

12 [And do not gloat] [on the day of your brother]—on the day of his downfall. Do not exult over the sons of Judah, on the day of his ruin.

Do not have a big mouth on the day of misfortune.

1:13 [Do not enter] [the gate of my people] on the day of their calamity,

[and do not gloat]—[not even you]—on his evil, on the day of his misfortune,

nor extend your hands over their treasures, on the day of their disaster.

14 [Do not stand] [at the crossroads] [to cut off] his fugitives, nor hand over his survivors on the day of distress.

15 For near is the day of YHWH [upon all the nations].

[Just as] [you have done], [so will it be done] to you. Your dealings will recoil on your own head.

16 [Because indeed], [just as] [you have drunk] on My [holy mountain], so will drink all the nations, ever more.

They will drink and stagger. [They will be] as though they had not been.

17 [But there shall be] [on Mount Zion] a surviving remnant, and it shall be holy.

[Then will possess] the house of Jacob their own possession.

18 [Then will become] the house of Jacob—a fire. [And the house] of Joseph [will become a flame],

and the house of Esau will be straw. They shall ignite them [and consume them].

[There will be] no survivors to the house of Esau, for YHWH has spoken.

19 It will be possessed by men from the south—the mountain [of Esau].

[Those of the lowland] [will possess Philistia]. [They will possess] the fields of Ephraim,

as well as the fields of Samaria, and Benjamin [will possess Gilead].

20 And the exiles—[of this fighting force]—[those of the children] of Israel [that are in Canaan], as far as Zarephath,

and the exiles of Jerusalem [who are in Sepharad]—[these shall occupy] and possess the towns of the south.

21 [Then will go up] rescuers—[they will ascend] [Mount Zion] to judge the mountain of Esau.

[end melody] And so to YHWH [shall belong the kingdom].

Len Fellman's English readings with tropes

The purpose of this project is to translate *THE SONG OF THE TORAH* into English.

I work by comparing as many as ten English translations of a *pasuk* and creating a cantillated English sentence that sounds as much as possible like the Hebrew. They follow the Hebrew as closely as possible, word for word and trope by trope. The English language has an amazing flexibility, making it possible to make the English word order match that of the Hebrew quite well, allowing for some "poetic licence", and some willingness on the part of the listener to be "carried" by the melody more than by the English syntax. The translation needs to sound good when *chanted*, but not necessarily when *spoken or read*.

Unlike most translations, these "transtropilations" are not intended to be a substitute for the Hebrew. On the contrary, they are meant to provide a "window" into the Hebrew text and its musical expression. My ideal listener knows enough Hebrew and has enough interest to follow the Hebrew in a bilingual text while the *leyner* is chanting the English version, to bring the Hebrew text to life, both *verbally* and *musically*. For this purpose I use *exactly* the same tropes in the English as in the Hebrew (almost always on the corresponding English word).

The texts can be used to do **consecutive translation**, i.e. leyning a phrase in Hebrew, followed by the corresponding phrase sung in English. Some of my recordings demonstrate this. I do this frequently when leyning for groups that either know little Hebrew, or that don't have a *chumash* in front of them.

I favor literal translations (e.g. "cut a covenant") to call attention to Hebrew idioms, and towards simpler (even if less accurate) words (e.g. Ex. 12:7 "beam above the door" rather than "lintel") to be easier to follow. If my readings provoke a discussion of the Hebrew, I consider that as justification for using less-than-idiomatic English. I try to find just the right balance between "literalness" and "listenable-ness". A primary goal is throwing light on the Hebrew syntax.

In order to adapt the trope symbols to a left-to-right language like English, I *reversed* the direction of the trope symbols:

mercha   tipcha   munach   tevir   mapakh *or* yetiv   kadma *or* pashta   geresh   gershayim   telisha katana   telisha gedola

(Generally speaking the *conjunctive tropes* such as mercha, munach, mapakh, kadma, and telisha katana "lean toward" the words they "conjoin" to, while the *disjunctive tropes* such as tipcha, geresh, gershayim, and telisha gedola "lean away" from the words that follow, so as to create a sense of separation.)

The trope symbol is normally placed under the accented syllable, unless it is a *pre-positive* accent (telisha gedola, placed *at the beginning* of the word or phrase) or a *post-positive* one (telisha katana or pashta, placed at the *end* of the word or phrase).

The Hebrew text frequently puts a *makkeph* (which is like a hyphen) between words in order to treat them as a single word to be chanted. I use a different system for English: If an entire English phrase is to be chanted to a single trope melody, I place it between grey brackets, as in this phrase from the Book of Lamentations:

[clings to her skirts]

The *leyner* is invited to fit this phrase to the *Eicha* "rivi'i" melody in whatever way seems most natural.

As a variant of the "grey bracket" device, I indicate pairs of tropes by "wrapping them around" the phrase which have the combined melody:

mercha/tipcha   kadma/geresh (*or*: azla, etc.)   mercha siluk
⌊Renew our days⌋   ⌈She weeps bitterly⌉.   ⌊a fire-offering to God⌋

Again, the *leyner* should decide on the most natural way to fit the phrase to the combined trope melody.

I put words in gray which I consider essential but which don't strictly match the Hebrew. I also "pad" some phrases with extra words in gray to fill out a musical phrase nicely. Different trope systems vary widely in the length of the musical phrase used, so the words in gray may or not be used depending on the leyner's cantillation system. In particular, the tropes *telisha g'dola* (⚲), *legarmeh*, *metigah-zakef*, and *pazer* vary widely in the muscial phrases used for chanting. (And please indulge me in my whimsical treatments of *shalshelet*.)

"*Metigah-zakef*" is a special trope combination which can be recognized by a kadma and a zakef katon appearing on the same Hebrew word (again, a *makkeph* makes two words into one). (There are several examples in Genesis 18 & 19, beginning with 18:16). I indicate this by placing the corresponding English phrase in grey brackets:

[Take heed—take care for yourself]

In some trope systems (viz. cantor Moshe Haschel in "Navigating the Bible II") this is given a distinctive melody—I add extra syllables to fill out the musical phrase (as in "take care" in this example). Haschel's system also chants the trope *munach* as *legarmeh* more often than other systems do.

I don't write a single word of translation without first hearing the melody of the phrase in my mind, following one of two trope systems:
The one by Portnoy and Wolff (*The Art of Cantillation*) or the one by Joshua R. Jacobson (*Chanting the Hebrew Bible*).

I transcribe the name יהוה as YHWH (in small caps). I almost always chant this as *yud-hey-vav-hey*, which I have discovered fits marvelously into several of the trope melodies. But of course the leyner can choose to pronounce it as "*God*" or "*Adonai*".

<u>Warning on the Hebrew text</u>: The text I use for the English trope system is from Aryeh Kaplan; the Hebrew text I display is from Wikisource. Occasionally (but rarely) a phrase will use different tropes in the two systems.

The English translations I mostly use (besides several scholarly commentaries) are the following:

Aryeh Kaplan, 'The Living Torah' (1981) (also my source for proper names & transliterations)
Richard Elliott Friedman, 'The Bible With Sources Revealed' (2003)
Everett Fox, 'The Five Books of Moses' (1997)
The Stone Edition 'Tanach' (1996)
JPS 'Hebrew-English Tanach', (2nd Ed. 2000), *along with* Orlinsky, 'Notes on the New Translation of the Torah' (1969)
Robert Alter, 'The Five Books of Moses' (2004)
Commentaries in the 'Anchor Bible' series
Rotherham, The Emphasized Bible (1902)
The Jerusalem Bible (1966) (also my source for topic headings)
The New King James Bible (1982)